National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC 20594

Brief of Accident

Adopted 12/08/1998

DCA96MA079
File No. 1724 | 09/05/1996 | NEWBURGH, NY | Aircraft Reg No. N68055 | Time (Local): 05:54 EDT

Make/Model:	McDonnell Douglas / DC-10-10CF
Engine Make/Model:	GE / CF6-6D
Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Number of Engines:	3
Operating Certificate(s):	Flag Carrier/Domestic
Type of Flight Operation:	Non-scheduled; Domestic; Cargo
Reg. Flight Conducted Under:	Part 121: Air Carrier

	Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Crew	0	0	5
Pass	0	0	0

Last Depart. Point:	MEMPHIS , TN
Destination:	BOSTON , MA
Airport Proximity:	On Airport
Airport Name:	NEWBURGH/STEWART INTL
Runway Identification:	27
Runway Length/Width (Ft):	11818 / 150
Runway Surface:	Asphalt
Runway Surface Condition:	Dry

Condition of Light:	Dawn
Weather Info Src:	Weather Observation Facility
Basic Weather:	Instrument Conditions
Lowest Ceiling:	3000 Ft. AGL, Broken
Visibility:	2.00 SM
Wind Dir/Speed:	280 / 004 Kts
Temperature (°C):	18
Precip/Obscuration:	

Pilot-in-Command Age: 47

Certificate(s)/Rating(s)
Airline Transport; Commercial; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land
Instrument Ratings
Airplane

Flight Time (Hours)

Total All Aircraft:	12344
Last 90 Days:	Unk/Nr
Total Make/Model:	2504
Total Instrument Time:	UnK/Nr

The airplane was at FL 330 when the flightcrew determined that there was smoke in the cabin cargo compartment. An emergency was declared and the flight diverted to Newburgh/Stewart International Airport and landed. The airplane was destroyed by fire after landing. The fire had burned for about 4 hours after after smoke was first detected. Investigation revealed that the deepest and most severe heat and fire damage occurred in and around container 6R, which contained a DNA synthesizer containing flammable liquids. More of 6R's structure was consumed than of any other container, and it was the only container that exhibited severe floor damage. Further, 6R was the only container to exhibit heat damage on its bottom surface, and the area below container 6R showed the most extensive evidence of scorching of the composite flooring material. However, there was insufficient reliable evidence to reach a conclusion as to where the fire originated. The presence of flammable chemicals in the DNA synthesizer was wholly unintended and unknown to the preparer of the package and shipper. The captain did not adequately manage his crew resourses when he failed to call for checklists or to monitor and facilitate the accomplishment of required checklist items. The Department of Transportation hazardous materials regulations do not adequately address the need for hazardous materials information on file at a carrier to be quickly retrievable in a format useful to emergency responders.

DCA96MA079
File No. 1724 | 09/05/1996 | NEWBURGH, NY | Aircraft Reg No. N68055 | Time (Local): 05:54 EDT

Occurrence #1: FIRE
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings
1. (C) CARGO/BAGGAGE - SMOKE
2. (C) CARGO/BAGGAGE - FIRE
3. (C) CARGO/BAGGAGE - UNDETERMINED
4. SUPERVISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. HAZARDOUS MATERIAL
6. INFORMATION INSUFFICIENT - OTHER GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows.
an in-flight cargo fire of undetermined origin. (NTSB Report AAR-98/03)